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## ART MATTERS.

Christmas has somewhat broken in upon the even tenor of your most obedient servant's way, sweet reader, so this week I am afraid I can give you but little that is new in the way of art; to tell the truth, one has a certain delicacy in intruding on the privacy of an artist's studio during the holiday season, and added to this the almost certainty that you will find the artist out, it is plainly apparent to the meanest capacity that it would be but time and labor thrown away to continue one's peregrinations among the studios; hence there is nothing left but to give you the few items remaining in my note book, and having crossed off the old score, turn over a new leaf for the incoming year of hopes, fears and proud aspirations.

There is on exhibition at Goupil's a new group in clay by Samuel Conkey, called "Pro Patria," which is attracting considerable attention and deserves some notice in these columns. The first thing that strikes one in looking at the group, is a certain lack of grace and harmony in its lines; the dead soldier is particularly stiff and awkward in action, and forms a straight, harsh line which catches the eye at once and detracts greatly from the female figure, which is really excellent, somewhat too melodramatic in action perhaps, but still characterized by such a fine expression of heart broken resignation that one cannot fail admiring it.

The story too, is well told: the battle is over, and the anxious mother has gone forth amidst the dying and the dead to see if perchance her first-born should be numbered among the slain, she finds him lying on the ground, cold and stiff—then, for a moment, the maternal feeling claims predominance in her heart, and with a loud cry of anguish she prostrates herself upon the dead body of her son—for a moment only, and then the proud, Spartan-like feeling holds possession of her, and with streaming eyes and hands uplifted to Heaven, she cries, "Thy will be done," and glories in the death of him who has fallen "Pro Patrias."

Mr. Conkey has caught this idea well, and were it not for the unfortunate stiffness in the general lines of his group it would call for almost unreserved praise.

Launt Thompson is at work on a model for a statue of Shakspeare, to be submitted to the Central Park Shakspeare Monument Association. The portrait has been taken almost entirely from the Stratford bust, which, with the Chandes portrait, is probably the most reliable likeness of the "Immortal Bard" extant, and is marked by great strength and intellectuality of expression. The figure is easy and graceful in action, and there is but little doubt that Mr. Thompson will be the successful competitor for the honor he desires. The gentleman has also just finished two admirable portrait busts of R. L. Minturn and the late Capt. Marshall, which are both excellent in their way.

Whittredge is at work on a large picture which he calls "On the Rhine;" a strong, bold work which is thoroughly good in every particular. In the sky Mr. Whittredge seems to have caught the feeling which characterizes the works of Lam-

binet, and renders them so eminently powerful and striking, while the sharp, rugged outlines of the work, looming up in the distance, stand out with vivid reality against the cool greys of the stormy clouds.

I am happy to learn that Jerome Thompson has found a purchaser for his really fine picture of "A Reminiscence of Mt. Mansfield," noticed at length in these columns some few weeks since.

Hays has at his studio the large picture of a "Bison at Bay," which, although painted some few years since, has never been exhibited in this country, having been sent to England almost as soon as finished. It is a large and imposing work, full of dramatic feeling and power; the galled, half defiant expression of the bison is very telling, while the sneaking cowardly action of the hungry wolves form a good contrast to the dignified figure of the wounded hero. The landscape is well and strongly painted, the sky being particularly good, and the entire picture may be set down as an almost unqualified success.

Hows has just finished an exquisite little landscape which he calls "Lower Ausable Pond, Adirondacks," full of the glowing color of the late Autumn bathed in the mellow, mysterious light of Indian Summer, and characterized by the delicacy of finish for which the gentleman has earned a well deserved reputation.

This is but a Homeopathic dose of Art, fair reader, but let us hope that when the hurry and enjoyment of Christmas and New Year's Day have passed, and the world in general, including art critics, have settled down into the humdrum jog trot of every-day life, that we may meet again and renew our talks of art and artists at greater length.

PALETTA.

## LITERARY MATTERS.

"THE SOLDIER'S ORPHANS," by Mrs. ANN S. STEPHENS. T. B. Peterson & Bros.

In the list of modern American writers of fiction, Mrs. Stephens probably occupies the highest position; her works are always interesting and have a smack of genuine human nature about them which renders their perusal a task equally enjoyable and delightful.

"The Soldier's Orphans" is the lady's latest production, and will compare favorably with any of her former efforts. The story is well and tersely told, while the drawing of characters is simply admirable. We sympathise with and admire old Mrs. Burns, fall in love with Anna, respect young Savage, laugh over the enthusiastic Robert, and, in short, enter fully into all the hopes, longings and loves of the characters introduced, and when we come to the last page feel somewhat angry with Mrs. Stephens that she has not given us a larger and more extensive literary feast.

This book should not be classed among the sensation novels with which the American market is overcrowded; on the contrary, it is just one of those homelike, quiet, domestic stories which every one likes to read; and although the plot is intensely interesting there is at the same time such an undercurrent of simplicity and *vraisemblance* running through it all that we cannot fail to admire the authoress who can so strongly rivet our attention without recourse to the claptrap

and exaggeration with which, alas, so many of our modern novelists eke out their otherwise "stale, flat and unprofitable" plots.

"THE BRIDE OF LLEWELLYN." By Mrs. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH. T. B. Peterson & Bros.

This is Mrs. Southworth's last work, and is filled with all the stirring incidents and intricacy of plot which characterize all the lady's writing. The story is very powerful, and, at times, written with considerable vigor and force. There is a vein of humor, too, running through it, which is very delightful, reaching a culminating point in the last chapter, which is quite Dickensish in style and character.

## RESIGNATION.

Thine own, O God, receive again,  
My grief no murmur waking,  
Whatever comes from Thee is gain,  
Thy giving and Thy taking.  
A free will offering, wholly Thine,  
My dearest treasure I resign,  
My heart of heart's oblation—  
A gift from Thee, 'tis still Thine own,  
Forever Thine, and Thine alone,  
And Thou my consolation.

I give it, Lord! I do not say  
Thy sovereign will compelling—  
Sorrow, that so arraigns Thy sway,  
Finds in my heart no dwelling.  
Repining but embitters loss,  
Robs Thee, and keeps me from the cross,  
By doubt and fear confounded.  
For what I yield, grant Thou to me,  
So much the greater part in Thee,  
Treasures of grace unbounded.

Gone home to Thee! dear Lord, I know  
Thine arm of love enfolds her,  
And though my eyes with tears o'erflow,  
I'll bless the hand that holds her.  
The *There* is better than the *Here*,  
And I, in weakness drawing near,  
My heart shall ne'er be grieving,  
That, when Thou camest, I was free,  
To give Thee what Thou loanedst me,  
Enriching, while bereaving.

## THE LONELY ONES.

A Fir tree standeth lonely  
Upon a Northern shore,  
So bleak, he heareth only  
The winds and waters roar.  
His sap is hardly stirring  
So deep his calm repose,  
Beneath his winter mantle  
Of sparkling ice and snow.

He dreameth of a Palm-tree  
In lands of fig and vine  
Beneath the glowing heavens  
Of distant Palestine.  
The palm-tree too is dreaming  
How far across the sea,  
In snowy robes and gleaming  
There stands a lonely tree.